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A person waits in line to vote in the Georgia's primary election on May 24, 2022, in Atlanta.
Associated Press

Most say voting vital despite dour U.S. outlook: AP-NORC poll

By HANNAH FINGERHUT

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — From his home in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, Graeme Dean says there's plenty that's disheartening about the state of the country and politics these days. At the center of one of this year's most competitive U.S. Senate races, he's on the receiving end of a constant barrage of vitriolic advertising that makes it easy to focus on what's going wrong. But the 40-year-old English teacher has no intention of disengaging from the democratic process. In fact, he believes that the first national election since the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol is "more significant" than in years past.

"This could very well sway the country in one direction or another," the Democratic-leaning independent said.

Dean is hardly alone in feeling the weight of this election. A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center of Public Affairs Research finds 71% of registered voters think the very future of the U.S. is at stake

when they vote this year. That's true of voters who prefer Republicans win majorities in Congress, and those who want to see Democrats remain in control, though likely for different reasons.

While about two-thirds of voters say they are pessimistic about politics, overwhelming majorities across party lines — about 8 in 10 — say casting their ballot this year is extremely or very important.

The findings demonstrate how this year's midterms are playing out in a unique environment, with voters both exhausted by the political process and determined to participate in shaping it. That could result in high turnout for a midterm election.

In the politically divided state of Michigan, for instance, over 150,000 voters have already cast absentee ballots. A total of 1.6 million people have requested absentee ballots so far, surpassing the 1.16 million who chose the option in the 2018 midterm election.

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Team Aruba became the revelation country during the South American Games Asuncion 2022 in Paraguay



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The life in balance of Aruban impressionist artist, Elvis Tromp



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Most say voting vital despite dour U.S. outlook: AP-NORC poll

Continued from Front

In follow-up interviews, poll respondents reported distinct concerns about the country's direction despite agreement that things are not working.

Rick Moore, a 67-year-old writer and musician in Las Vegas, said he's dissatisfied with President Joe Biden, and "not just because I'm a Republican." Moore called him "more of a puppet" than any other president in his lifetime.

"It's important to me that Republicans are in control of as much as possible because we're not going to get rid of the Democratic president anytime soon," Moore said.

In general, Moore said, he doesn't like the way Democratic politicians run their states, including Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak, adding that Democrats are "using the word democracy to make all of us do what they want."

"I would just like to see my voice more represented," he said.

Since the last midterm elections, voters have grown more negative about the country and people's rights: 70% say they are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the U.S., up from 58% in October 2018. Republicans have become enormously dissatisfied with a Democrat in the White House. While Democrats have become less negative since Donald Trump left



Cornelius Whiting fills out his ballot at an early voting location in Alexandria, Va., Sept. 26, 2022.

Associated Press

office, they remain largely sour on the way things are going.

Fifty-eight percent of voters also say they are dissatisfied with the state of individual rights and freedoms in the U.S., up from 42% in 2018. About two-thirds of Republicans are now dissatisfied, after about half said they were satisfied when Trump was in office. Among Democrats, views have stayed largely the same, with about half dissatisfied.

Shawn Hartlage, 41, doesn't think her views as a Christian are well represented, lamenting that she'd

love to vote "for someone that really stood for what you believe," but that it's very important to her to vote anyway.

The Republican stay-at-home mother of two in Washington Township, Ohio, said the direction of the country is "devastating," noting both inflation and a decline in moral values.

"I'm scared for my children's future," Hartlage said. "You always want to leave things better for them than what you had, but it's definitely not moving in that direction."

Teanne Townsend of Red-

ford, Michigan, agrees that things are moving backward. But the 28-year-old called out abortion, health care and police brutality as especially concerning areas in which rights are being threatened.

"We have minimum progression in the right direction for a lot of areas, especially for people of minority (groups). Their rights are not the same as those of other races and cultures," the Democrat, who is African American, said.

A children's health and mental health specialist, Townsend said she's voting for her constitutional right

to an abortion this year. If passed, the state's ballot initiative would guarantee abortion rights in the Michigan Constitution.

"I feel like it's just a lot that's at stake," Townsend said, adding that she's both "optimistic and nervous" about the outcome but that it's "the right thing" for people to be able to vote on it.

The poll showed majorities of voters overall say the outcome of the midterms will have a significant impact on abortion policy, with Democratic voters more likely than Republican voters to say so. Most voters across party lines say the outcome will have a lot of impact on the economy. More voters say they trust the Republican Party to handle the economy (39% vs. 29%), as well as crime (38% vs. 23%). Republicans also have a slight advantage on immigration (38% vs. 33%). The Democratic Party is seen as better able to handle abortion policy (45% vs. 22%), health care (42% vs. 25%) and voting laws (39% vs. 29%).

Despite the uncertainty in the outcome, Dean in Pennsylvania has faith in the American system to work for the will of the people.

"I think it's important that our representatives represent what the majority of people want," Dean said. "That's what we claim we do in this country and it feels like it is what should happen. And I am hopeful." □

Former President Obama, Michelle Obama in Chicago to vote

CHICAGO (AP) — Former President Barack Obama is about to hit the campaign trail ahead of the Nov. 8 election, but he came home Monday with the former first lady to vote. The two came to Chicago to vote in the city where Michelle Obama was born and raised and where the former president began his political career, first working as a community organizer before he was elect-

ed as a state senator, a U.S. senator and ultimately, president.

They arrived at the Chicago Board of Elections Supersite in downtown Chicago shortly after 12:30 p.m. They chatted with poll workers, shook hands, voted and then left.

The former president said he missed the old punch-style ballots, joking that they were a way to "get out some aggression,"

some frustrations."

The former president is scheduled to be in Atlanta on Oct. 28 to campaign on behalf of Stacey Abrams, the Democrat running for governor of Georgia against Republican Gov. Brian Kemp.

After that, he plans to campaign in Michigan and Wisconsin on behalf of Democrats running for governor, senator and down the ballot. □



Former President Barack Obama, left, and former first lady Michelle Obama cast their ballots at an early voting venue Monday, Oct. 17, 2022, in Chicago.

Associated Press

Court rejects appeal to give American Samoans citizenship

By MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Monday rejected an appeal seeking to give people born in American Samoa U.S. citizenship.

In leaving in place an appeals court decision, the court also passed up an invitation to overturn a series of decisions dating back to 1901 known as the Insular Cases, replete with racist and anti-foreign rhetoric. Justice Neil Gorsuch had called for the cases to be overturned in April.

But the justices refused to take up an appeal from people born in American Samoa, and living in Utah, who argued that a federal law declaring that they are "nationals, but not citizens, of the United States at birth" is unconstitutional.

A trial judge in Utah ruled in their favor, but the federal appeals court in Denver said Congress, not courts, should decide the citizenship issue. The appeals court also noted that American Samoa's elected leaders opposed the lawsuit for fear that it might disrupt their cultural traditions.

"It's a punch in the gut



The U.S. Supreme Court is seen, Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2022 in Washington.

Associated Press

for the Justices to leave in place a ruling that says I am not equal to other Americans simply because I was born in a U.S. territory," John Fitsemanu, the lead plaintiff, said in a statement. "I was born on U.S. soil, have a U.S. passport and pay my taxes like everyone else. But because of a discriminatory federal law, I am not recognized as a U.S. citizen."

American Samoa is the only unincorporated territory of

the United States where the inhabitants are not American citizens at birth. Instead, those born in the cluster of islands some 2,600 miles (4,184 kilometers) southwest of Hawaii are granted "U.S. national" status, meaning they can't vote for U.S. president, run for office outside American Samoa or apply for certain jobs. The only federal election they can cast a vote in is the race for American Samoa's nonvoting U.S.

House seat.

The Insular Cases, which arose following the Spanish-American War, dealt with the administration of overseas territories.

In their conclusion that residents of territories had some, but not all, rights under the Constitution, justices wrote in stark racial and xenophobic terms. Citizenship could not be automatically given to "those absolutely unfit to receive it," one justice wrote.

That history prompted Gorsuch to comment in a case involving benefits denied to people who live in Puerto Rico, decided in April. He wrote that the Insular Cases were wrongly decided because they deprived residents of U.S. territories of some constitutional rights.

"It is past time to acknowledge the gravity of this error and admit what we know to be true: The Insular Cases have no foundation in the Constitution and rest instead on racial stereotypes. They have no place in our law," Gorsuch wrote. The case stems from a lawsuit filed by three American Samoa natives now living in Utah, where they are prohibited from voting or becoming police officers.

The Biden administration joined the American Samoa government in calling for the court to reject the appeal. Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar, the administration's top Supreme Court lawyer, wrote that "the government in no way relies on the indefensible and discredited aspects of the Insular Cases' reasoning and rhetoric" that was highlighted in the appeal. □

House panel: Trump's bills to Secret Service 'exorbitant'

By BERNARD CONDON

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's private company arranged for the Secret Service to pay for rooms at his properties in excess of government-approved rates at least 40 times during his presidency, including two charges for more than \$1,100 per night, according to documents released Monday by a congressional committee.

The Secret Service was charged room rates of more than \$800 per night at least 11 times when agents stayed at Mar-a-Lago in Florida, the Trump hotel in Washington, D.C., and other properties, the Democratic-led House Oversight Committee said. It noted that Trump made over 500 trips to his properties while president. The "exorbitant"

rates point to a possible "taxpayer-funded windfall for former President Trump's struggling businesses," wrote N.Y. Rep. Carolyn Maloney in a letter Monday to the Secret Service requesting more information. The Trump Organization denied that the Secret Service charges were a problem and said it provided rooms and other services at cost, at big discounts or for free.

"The Trump Family is likely the first family in American history to have not profited off of the United States government," said Eric Trump in a statement. He added, "President Trump funded the vast majority of his campaign with hundreds of millions of dollars of his own money and turned away billions of dollars in real estate deals worldwide."

In total, the Trump Organi-

zation charged the agency responsible for protecting the president and his family at least \$1.4 million, according to Secret Service records released by the committee. The committee said the total bill was likely higher because the panel only got records through September 2021 and payments for trips abroad were not included.

The former president has been repeatedly criticized by Democrats and government watchdogs for what they say were brazen attempts to make money from taxpayer funds during his presidency.

In addition to money from the Secret Service when he and his family visited his clubs and hotels, Trump played host to foreign officials at his properties, also requiring lodging for ac-

companying agents. The president tried to arrange for his Trump National Doral Golf Club in Florida to be chosen as the venue for a Group of Seven meeting of global leaders, only to pull back after an outcry of about self dealing.

Among the documents released Monday was a bill tied to 2017 trip by Trump's

oldest son, Don Jr., to the Trump International Hotel down the street from the White House. That resulted in a Secret Service room charge of \$1,185 per night, more than five times the government-approved per diem rate, the committee said, though the agency is allowed to make exceptions. □



Former President Donald Trump speaks at a rally, Sunday, Oct. 9, 2022, in Mesa, Ariz.

Associated Press

U.S. government tells Arizona to remove border containers

By ANITA SNOW

Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The federal government is demanding the state remove double-stacked shipping containers placed to fill gaps in the wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, saying they are unauthorized and violate U.S. law.

The Cocopah Indian Tribe in southwestern Arizona welcomed the call to take down the containers in the latest rift between the Biden administration and Republican-led border states over how to prevent illegal border crossings.

The Bureau of Reclamation also demanded in last week's letter that no new containers be placed. It said the bureau wants to prevent conflicts with two federal contracts that have been awarded and two more still pending to fill border wall gaps near the Morelos Dam in the Yuma, Arizona, area.

"The unauthorized placement of those containers constitutes a violation of federal law and is a trespass against the United States," the letter states. "That trespass is harming federal lands and resources and impeding Reclamation's ability to perform its mission."

There was no immediate response Monday from Republican Gov. Doug Du-



Border Patrol agents patrol along a line of shipping containers stacked near the border on Aug. 23, 2022, near Yuma, Ariz.

Associated Press

cey's office, but it said in the past it would remove the containers if the U.S. government starts construction to fill the gaps.

The tribe complained last month that the state of Arizona acted against its wishes by placing 42 of the double stacks on its land near Yuma to halt illegal border crossings in an area that has become a major entry point for migrants.

"We believe the Bureau is taking the necessary and appropriate action to resolve this issue," the Cocopah tribe said in a statement distributed Monday.

"Beyond that, we will continue working side-by-side with local, state and federal law enforcement on securing the border."

Ducey ordered installation of more than 100 double-stacked containers that were placed over the summer, saying he couldn't wait for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to award the contracts it had announced for work to fill the gaps in the border wall in the Yuma area.

Migrants nevertheless have continued to avoid the recently erected barriers by going around them, includ-

ing through the Cocopah Indian Reservation.

The border wall promoted by former President Donald Trump continues to be a potent issue for Republican politicians hoping to show their support for border security.

President Joe Biden halted wall construction his first day in office, leaving billions of dollars of work unfinished but still under contract. Trump worked at the end of his term to reach more than 450 miles (720 kilometers), nearly a quarter of the border.

The Biden administration

has made a few exceptions for small projects at areas deemed unsafe for people to cross, including the gaps near Yuma.

The quibble over the containers close to Yuma underscores the obstacles faced when constructing barriers on the southern U.S. border. Building on tribal land, including in the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona, can face opposition. Landowners, especially in Texas, where much property is privately owned, also can refuse to sign off on construction.

Ducey, like fellow Republican Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas, has often sparred with the Democratic administration over immigration policies. Both states in recent months have been offering free bus rides to the East Coast for asylum seekers who are released in the United States to pursue their cases.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has arranged private flights of Venezuelans from San Antonio, Texas to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

"Arizona did the job the federal government has failed to do and we showed them just how quickly and efficiently the border can be made more secure if you want to," Ducey said when the containers were installed in southern Arizona. □

Kansas to search grounds of former Native American school

FAIRWAY, Kan. (AP) — The grounds of a former Native American boarding school in Kansas will be searched to determine if any Indigenous children were buried there, state officials said.

The Kansas Historical Society, which owns the site in Fairway, is contracting with the University of Kansas Center for Research to conduct a ground-penetrating radar survey of the 12 acres (nearly 5 hectares) to search for unmarked graves, The Kansas City Star reported. The current Shawnee Indian Mission historical site was one of hundreds of schools run by the government and religious groups

in the 1800s and 1900s. Thousands of Native American children were forcibly taken from their homes and

placed in such schools, with a goal of assimilating them into white American culture and Christianity.



This undated photo shows the Shawnee Indian Mission in Fairway, Kan.

Associated Press

The U.S. Interior Department announced last year that it was investigating the nation's treatment of Native American children at the boarding schools. A federal report released in May identified more than 500 student deaths at the institutions, but officials said that figure was expected to grow into the thousands as research continues. Leaders of the Shawnee Tribe and other tribes had requested a search of the Fairway site. But tribal officials said in a statement that they were not consulted about the Historical Society's project proposal before it was announced.

"We have requested formal consultation to address serious concerns about the motives of this project, potential deficiencies in the process that may render incomplete findings, and what plans may be for utilizing any results from the project," the tribe said.

Patrick Zollner, executive director of the historical society, responded that the Shawnee Tribe was the "first to know" about the project proposal.

He said the society also contacted other tribes, including the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, Kaw Nation, Osage Nation and others. □

UK leader in peril after Treasury chief axes 'Trussonomics'

By JILL LAWLESS and DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The U.K.'s new Treasury chief ripped up the government's economic plan on Monday, dramatically reversing most of the tax cuts and spending plans that new Prime Minister Liz Truss announced less than a month ago. The move raises more questions about how long the beleaguered British leader can stay in office.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt, said he was scrapping "almost all" of Truss' tax cuts, along with her flagship energy policy and her promise repeated just last week that there will be no public spending cuts.

While the reversal of policy calmed financial markets and helped restore the government's economic credibility, it further undermined the prime minister's rapidly crumbling authority and fueled calls for her to step down before her despairing Conservative Party forces her out.

Truss declined to attend the House of Commons to answer a question on the economy from the leader of the opposition, sending House of Commons leader Penny Mordaunt in her place. Mordaunt denied a lawmaker's suggestion that Truss was "cowering under her desk" to avoid scrutiny. "The prime minister is not under a desk," Mordaunt said, words hardly likely to inspire confidence in the leader who only came to power last month.

Truss' spokesman said the prime minister and Hunt had jointly agreed on the economic changes. But Hunt told Conservative lawmakers that Truss "backed him to the hilt in making difficult decisions" suggesting he has a free hand to make policy.

With Truss sitting silently beside him, Hunt told lawmakers that he was canceling Truss' plan to reduce the basic rate of income tax by 1 percentage point and most of her other libertarian economic policies. In a message aimed squarely at reassuring the financial

markets, he said Britain was "a country that funds our promises and pays our debts."

Immediately spooked the financial markets. The cuts fueled investor concerns about unsustainable levels

facing a cost-of-living crisis as food, fuel and mortgage prices soar. Hunt told lawmakers that



Jeremy Hunt leaves 10 Downing Street in London after he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer following the resignation of Kwasi Kwarteng, Friday Oct. 14, 2022.

Associated Press

"And when that is questioned, as it has been, this government will take the difficult decisions necessary to ensure there is trust and confidence in our national finances," Hunt said.

Such major policy announcements are normally made first in the House of Commons, but Hunt disclosed most of the details hours in advance in a televised statement.

Hunt was appointed Friday after Truss fired his predecessor Kwasi Kwarteng, who spent less than six weeks in the Treasury job. Hunt is seeking to restore the Conservative government's credibility for sound fiscal policy after Truss and Kwarteng rushed out a plan for tax cuts without detailing how they would pay for them.

Truss and Kwarteng jointly came up with a Sept. 23 announcement of 45 billion pounds (\$50 billion) in unfunded tax cuts that im-

of government borrowing, which pushed up government borrowing costs, raised home mortgage costs and sent the pound plummeting to an all-time low against the dollar. The Bank of England was forced to intervene to protect pension funds, which were squeezed by volatility in the bond market.

Over the weekend, Hunt has been dismantling that economic plan. The government had already ditched parts of its tax-cutting plan and announced it would make a medium-term fiscal statement on Oct. 31, weeks earlier than previously scheduled.

On Monday, Hunt went further.

He scaled back a cap on energy prices designed to help households pay their bills. It will now be reviewed in April rather than lasting two years sweeping away one of Truss' signature plans to help Britons

the measures he announced would save 32 billion pounds a year, but that spending cuts were also coming.

"There remain, I'm afraid, many difficult decisions to be announced" in the fuller budget statement on Oct. 31, he said.

Hunt also said he was setting up a new Economic Advisory Council of economists and investment bankers to help inform policy a far cry from Truss' bid to throw out economic "orthodoxy."

The pound rose more than 1% to above \$1.13 in London after Hunt's morning announcement. That pushed the U.K. currency back above where it was trading on Sept. 22, the day before Kwarteng announced the tax cuts.

Yields on 10-year government bonds, an indicator of government borrowing costs, fell to 3.947% from 4.327% on Friday. It was

3.495% on Sept. 22. Bond yields tend to rise as the risk of a borrower defaulting increases.

Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies think tank, said Monday's announcements would not be enough "to undo the damage caused by the debacle of the last few weeks. But they are big, welcome, clear steps in the right direction."

The financial fiasco has turned Truss into a lame-duck prime minister. She took office just six weeks ago after winning a party election to replace Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who was forced out in July after ethics scandals ensnared his administration. Many Conservatives now believe their only hope is to replace Truss.

The Conservative Party still commands a large majority in Parliament, and in theory has two years until a national election must be held. Polls suggest holding an election now would be a wipeout for the Tories, with the Labour Party winning a big majority.

Labour Party economics spokeswoman Rachel Reeves said Truss was "barely in office, and she is certainly not in power," and claimed the Conservatives could not fix the problems they had caused. "They've set fire to everything."

Now they insist it is all fine," she said. "The truth is an arsonist is still an arsonist, even if he runs back into the burning building with a bucket of water."

Chris Beauchamp, chief market analyst at online trading firm IG, said the markets were reassured by the presence of Hunt, a former foreign U.K. secretary and health chief.

"I think markets in some ways would rather things just stayed as they are for a while," he said. "OK, the PM has found her authority quite truncated. But at least you've got the chancellor in place almost running the country ..."

"I think they're quite content with that slightly odd state of affairs, for the moment." □

Salvador court orders arrests in Dutch journalist killings

By MARCOS ALEMÁN

Associated Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador

(AP) — A Salvadoran judge has ordered the provisional arrest of several retired high-ranking members of the armed forces accused of having participated in the killings of four Dutch journalists in 1982 while they were covering the Central American nation's civil war. Among those facing arrest orders are former defense minister Gen. José Guillermo García and Col. Francisco Antonio Morán, former director of the now-defunct treasury police, according to the judge's ruling, a copy of which was seen on Sunday by The Associated Press.

Neither the National Civil Police, which is charged with carrying out the court order, nor the Public Ministry have confirmed the arrest warrants or whether they have been carried out. Neither agency immediately responded to requests for comment.

The ruling by Judge María Mercedes Arguello in Chalatenango province also mentions Col. Mario Adalberto Reyes Mena, former



The former defense minister of El Salvador, José Guillermo García-Merino is surrounded by the press as he arrives at the "Oscar Arnulfo Romero" international airport in San Luis Talpa, El Salvador, Friday, Jan. 8, 2016.

Associated Press

commander of El Salvador's Fourth Infantry Brigade, who currently resides in the United States. The judge ordered that authorities begin an extradition process against him.

Also included in the ruling are Gen. Rafael Flores Lima, former chief of staff of the armed forces, who died on June 29, 2020, and Sgt. Mario Canizales, who

has also died. Canizales allegedly led the patrol that carried out the massacre of the journalists.

Morán and Reyes Mena, as well as Canizales, are identified as the perpetrators of the massacre, while generals García and Flores Lima were accused of crimes of omission. In March, relatives of the victims, and representatives of the

Dutch government and the European Union demanded that El Salvador bring to justice those responsible for the murders of Dutch television journalists Jan Kuiper, Koos Koster, Hans ter Laag and Joop Willemsen.

Oscar Pérez of the Comunicandonos Foundation, which represents victims' families, said that in March 2018 the foundation filed a

criminal complaint with the El Salvador's Attorney General's Office to investigate the murders of the Dutch journalists. In response, the Prosecutor's Office prosecuted the case and sent the file to a court in the municipality of Dulce Nombre de María in Chalatenango province, where in the case was opened in 1982.

The killings took place during the height of El Salvador's civil war between the government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, or FMLN, guerrillas.

The Dutch TV journalists had linked up with leftist rebels and planned to spend several days behind rebel lines reporting.

But Salvadoran soldiers armed with assault rifles and machine guns ambushed them and the guerrillas. The United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador, which was set up as part of a U.N.-brokered peace agreement in 1992, said in a report on wartime human rights violations that the ambush was set up to kill the journalists, and was ordered by Col. Mario Reyes Mena. □

Digital activists challenge Uganda's harsh new internet law

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)

— Ugandan activists launched a legal challenge Monday to controversial new legislation criminalizing some internet activity in the East African country.

Their petition to the constitutional court argues that the description of computer-related crimes in the bill enacted with President Yoweri Museveni's signature last week violates the right to freedom of expression and criminalizes some digital work, including investigative journalism.

In presenting their petition at the court in the capital, Kampala, the petitioners were backed by silent protesters who carried placards reading "This law is worth breaking."

The legislation increased

the restrictions introduced in a controversial 2011 law on the misuse of computers. The legislation, passed by the national assembly in September, was brought by a lawmaker who said it was necessary to deter those who hide behind computers to hurt others.

The new law proposes jail

terms of up to seven years in some cases, including for offenses related to the transmission of information about a person without their consent, as well as the sharing or intercepting of information without authorization.

"Yes, we live in the digital space. But do you have the

right to take my picture and use it for your interests?" Muhammad Nsereko, the lawmaker who brought the bill, told The Associated Press by phone Monday.

Opponents of the law say it will stifle freedom of expression in a country where many of Museveni's opponents for years unable to stage street protests often raise their concerns on Twitter and other online sites. Others say it will kill investigative journalism.

Critics range from the Committee to Protect Journalists to Amnesty International, which called the legislation "draconian."

"This piece of legislation threatens the right to freedom of expression online, including the right to receive and impart information, on the pretext of outlawing unsolicited, false, malicious, hateful, and

unwarranted information," Amnesty International's Muleya Mwananyanda said.

"It is designed to deliberately target critics of government and it will be used to silence dissent and prevent people from speaking out."

While the law has useful provisions such as those protecting the right to privacy, including responsible coverage of children, "it introduces punitive penalties for anyone accused of so-called hate speech," the statement added.

Museveni, 78, has held power in Uganda since 1986 and won re-election last year. Although he is popular among some Ugandans who praise him for restoring relative peace and economic stability, many of his opponents describe his rule as authoritarian. □



Digital activists hold placards as they demonstrate after submitting a legal petition against controversial new legislation criminalizing some internet activity, at the constitutional court in Kampala, Uganda Monday, Oct. 17, 2022.

Associated Press

Team Aruba became the revelation country during the South American Games Asuncion 2022 in Paraguay



ORANJESTAD – The South American Sports Organization (ODESUR) recognized the great work and historical performance of the Aruban delegation in Asuncion. Because of this, Aruba became known as the Revelation Country in ASU2022.

On the final score, Aruba was 10th place overall with three gold medals and three silver medals, with only 12 athletes participating among big countries in world sports.

Kamilah and Abigail Dammers win gold in Bowling

The Dammers sisters managed to snag gold medals both in doubles and singles. Together, they won gold in doubles and then Kamilah went on to win gold in singles.

In the grand final, Kamilah faced off against Juliana Franco who

beat Abigail in the round of 8. Even though Franco won two of the three games, the amount of pin difference gave Aruba an advantage, and in the end, Kamilah defeated Franco with a difference of 14 pin, winning the gold medal.

Seeing the sublime performance of Kamilah and Abigail Dammers at the South American Games Asuncion 2022, both Aruban bowlers automatically go through to qualify for the Panamerican Games 2023 which will take place next year in Santiago de Chile.

Malik Hoeveling wins silver in IQ Foil
Athlete Malik Hoeveling competed in IQ foil at the South American Games Asuncion 2022 and won the silver medal.

After many days of battle in Encarnacion, Malik arrived to the last day of competition in first place in

the rankings and with two points of advantage over Argentina. It wasn't easy to maintain his position because of bad weather in Encarnacion, Paraguay.

At first it was indicated that they would do a course race, but at the last minute changed this to slalom and this proved difficult with the wind conditions, and Malik lost important points.

Britta Schwengle with good performance in Open Water

Britta Schwengle looks back to a great performance at the South American Games Asuncion 2022. She represented Aruba in Encarnacion at the Parana River. Despite the fact that the competition was suspended on two occasions because of heavy rains, the athlete felt prepared for the challenge.

Encarnacion had a temperature

of 13 degrees Celsius, and with rain and strong winds, it felt a little colder. When the officers tested the water temperature, this was 19 degrees Celsius, making the use of a body suit optional. Britta decided to use her tech suit because she is not used to the body suit.

After an hour in the water, the weather darkened again and it began raining heavily, causing an almost complete loss of visibility, making conditions harder for Britta. Despite these challenges, Britta kept her position and in the last lap positioned herself in 11th place.

Britta feels satisfied with her participation in Paraguay and is ready for her next competition representing Aruba once more.

Photographs from Aruban Olympic Committee.



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PALM BEACH, ARUBA – Radisson Blu Aruba, located in Palm Beach, celebrated the soft opening of its new Peruvian pop-up restaurant last week. The unique and stylish Blu Bar: A Peruvian-inspired restaurant that offers everything that you love about Peruvian fusion cuisine, but with a modern twist.

Diners can expect to find many seafood-centric dishes including popular Peruvian eats such as Ceviches and Tíraditos. Some of the highlights from the dinner menu include mouthwatering dishes such as the team's favorite: cowboy pork glazed with blackberries jam served with 'fufu', local fish on a sugar

snap peas puree, NY strip with Peruvian chimichurri, and 8 hours slow-cooked beef brisket; all dishes enhanced by a modern twist on flavors and presentation. The Executive chef and his team are clearly dedicated to making you come back presenting you tasty appetizers or full entrée offerings.

As for libations, the beverage team built an equal innovative menu with a detailed selection of stunning wines and signature cocktails to pair with each dish.

The next hot spot in Palm Beach

The pop-up is the only spot for Peruvian



dining in Palm Beach and offers both indoor dining with panoramic floor to ceiling windows, and outdoor seating with a picturesque view of the resort's luxurious pool and lush gardens. The upscale atmosphere, rich in original architectural details absolute perfect location for dining with loved ones, clients, and business associates. At night, the restaurant's chic bar is a lively place to gather with friends for cocktails and cozy vibes.

One thing must be said: the hotel's staff makes a difference. Real smiles, real attention and real enthusiasm is what you encounter. Here we are experiencing something new, and a new place has new vibes, for you to discover. Radisson Blu Aruba invites locals and visitors alike to enjoy a Peruvian culinary experience they will never forget. Located in the heart of Radisson Blu Aruba, Blu Bar is open daily from 5PM to 11PM.

Unwind with local prices and a singing angel

Blu Bar offers a nice selection of wines and each Wednesday you will only pay in Florins. The Dollar to Florin deals – 44% discount – on wine bottles start from 5PM every Wednesday. Now it gets even better because from 7PM you can enjoy the amazing voice of local singer Amy Sorinio. The all-round performer has a unique voice and a great energy. She easily connects with her public and enchants you with jazz, easy listening, pop, soul, Latin... name a style and she can do it. Her passion led her travelling all around the world and you will feel her experience and genuine love for music.

Reservations are not required, and walk-ins are welcome. Go and find out why Blu Bar is the next hotspot for a bite, a drink or more. □

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For today we received a lovely message from Daniel Blair



"Aruba to me is enjoying sunsets and drinks with our great friends."

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For Directions

History of fishing in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fisherman is Gregory Wernet.

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil -industry Aruban fishermen could supply Aruba's wants. As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats during that time. The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the parago or red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wovo di boyo.



Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from 3 to almost 7 feet. The king-fish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclal may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds. Most fish caught is used for their own consumption, to feed their families and some are being sold in the market to local restaurants.

Fisherman Gregory Wernet

Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they

were only 3 years old and he takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snapper, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines, lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known in Aruba as piskechi. The

have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have at home. The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature has to offer is all worth it. □

Source: Etnia Nativia



The life in balance of Aruban impressionist artist, Elvis Tromp

ORANJESTAD – He had barely a few hours to complete the painting of House Ecury for the unveiling ceremony of the 103rd commemorative house of KLM, but the challenge didn't affect Elvis Tromp's (59) concentration. Not even with all the guests around him, chatting, asking questions, was the painter hindered in his goal, which was making sure that there is a completed painting ready to be gifted to the director of KLM for a special moment for Aruba and for KLM.

And those who know Elvis know that this is the way the Aruban painter works. He has a wide portfolio of remarkable paintings, most of which a reflection of landscape and architecture of Aruba. But perhaps what is attractive is that Elvis is a tax controller during the day, even though his intention was never to become a tax specialist. Quite the opposite, Tromp's intention was to learn information technology combined with art studies, but life had other plans for him.

Elvis always knew that his passion was in painting. His father worked as a house painter and would bring the rest of his paint home, where his son would observe all the colors, the mixes, for as far as he can remember, this allowed the child to experiment.

"I started drawing with pencil, but I began using paint when I was seven years old", Elvis told us. The reason he knows it was that age so clearly is thanks to neighbors who had his paintings stored from the time he was that age. "I know for sure in any case that at that age I was already using paint."

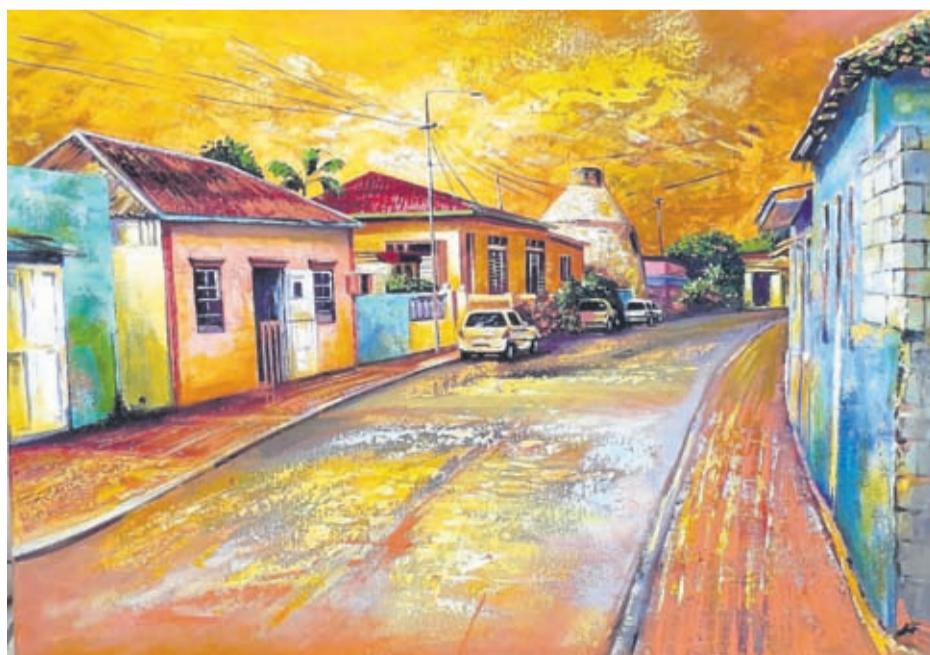
It was his father, a sculptor, who stimulated Elvis' creativity, and he began selling his art from a young age. He sold his first painting when

he was ten years old. "It was a painting of Alto Vista. The paint wasn't even dry, but even like that I sold it." Elvis determined the price himself. "It was a very low price. But the late Julie Oduber was selling my paintings and one of her assistants said that a collector in the Netherlands had 24 of my paintings." Elvis wasn't even 15 years old.

Elvis' intention was to save money to go study in the Netherlands as soon as he finished Colegio Arubano (Aruba's highest secondary education). It was his cousin who came with a letter already written for Elvis to just sign to apply for a job at the government. "I filled it in with the intention for working there temporarily, and then go study." Elvis got the job and right away began completing courses, and in three years he became deputy commissioner, something that normally takes a lot longer to achieve. "Every day after work I would study and that way I grew. By then, I bought a car and was tied to other expenses which made it difficult to leave Aruba."

Even so, Elvis retained the ambition to continue studying and received the opportunity to follow an internal course for tax controller organized by the Tax Department at the University of Aruba, for which a teacher came from the Netherlands. And in two years, Elvis specialized in tax document control and other areas.

Because Elvis studied in Aruba, he didn't realize his ambition to go to an art academy in the Netherlands. "But many people told me that perhaps it is good I didn't go, because in an academy they can push a student in a specific direction. This allowed me to develop my own technique."



Elvis Tromp is autodidactic when it comes to his art and his ambition was to become a really good painter. He had to teach himself the techniques that could've been a lot easier if he had studied art. But his discipline pushed him to learn everything, even the ones he didn't like, like the impasto technique that has a lot of texture and from paint leads to creation.

Elvis knew he liked fine paint right away, "but after a lot of practice, I realized I got the technique and I liked it. After that, I realized that impressionists painted like that, a long time ago already. So I realized that I discovered something for myself that already existed for a long time." And when Elvis realized this, his own paintings started reminding him of the work of impressionists who in the first instance he didn't like, because he liked realistic art.

Elvis' life was marked by two extremes, a very rigid job and his

art where he determines the limits himself. "Perhaps that is what keeps me in balance", Elvis commented. "I put a lot of time in art to compensate my work that affects people." His hope is that one day he can dedicate completely to his art, where he can affect people in the way he wants. In the meantime, he can count on a family that supports his passion. His wife and children know that in the hours after work, Elvis is in his studio, painting. In the weekend he spends some hours doing chores around the house, but always reserves some hours for painting.

Elvis' trajectory, from the child who taught himself to paint, to one of the impressionist painters most appreciated in Aruba, continues. His vision for life after retiring from public service is one dedicated to his art. And as he painted for the event for KLM, the reality is that Elvis Tromp will only continue spreading his artistic wings even wider. □



CROSSWORD

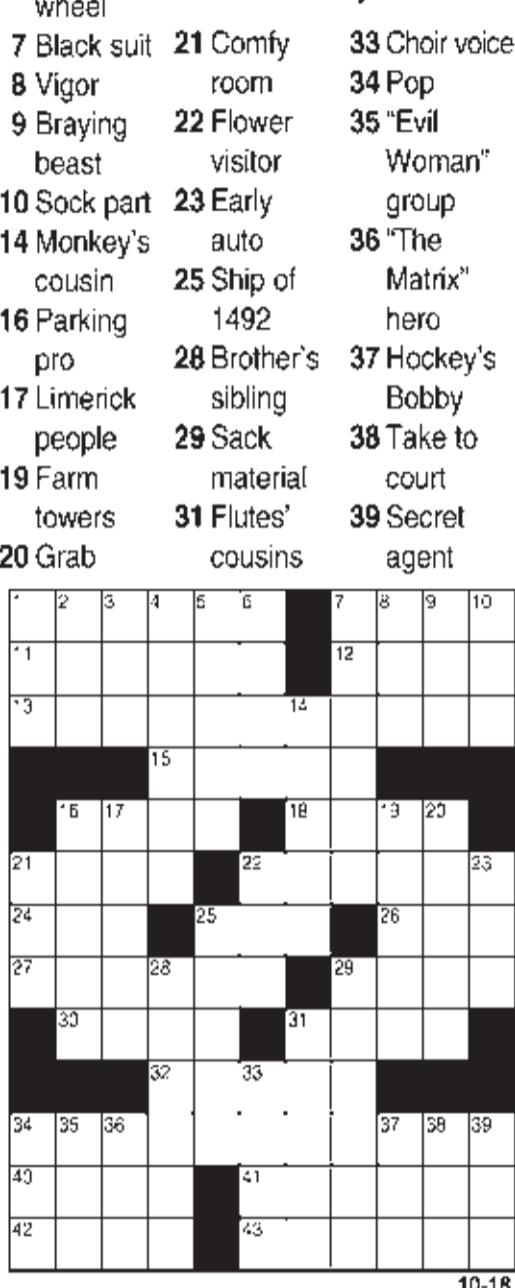
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS DOWN

1 Pungent veggie 1 Ewe's mate
 7 Petty argument 2 Dined
11 Right away
12 Mexican coin
13 Careless mistake
15 Ready for war
16 Sinfulness
18 Clutter
21 Pub missile
22 More active
24 Yale student
25 For each
26 Tell tales
27 Scottish beast
29 Doofus
30 Like dimes
31 Join together
32 Flight unit
34 Between-teeth cleaner
40 Out of the wind
41 Shred
42 Cabinet part
43 Fish hawk

PAWNS	PACTS
AWAIT	IDAHO
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CORAL	AGORA
ITALIA	HAIR
	LENGTHEN
EGO	STAB
NOVEL	PAPAL
DUETO	ELITE
STRAW	SLEET

Yesterday's answer

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-18

CRYPTOQUOTE

D Y Q Q G I M Q P Y M Z E P
 A G I O K P L O G K E Q Q G I M
 Y X P E I K E Q V G B Q G I Z U P O L
 Q G I M L Y Q Z. — A Y K V P M H O P

U I C Z I I N P M

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WHEN YOU REALLY WANT TO SHOW SOME LOVE, KEEP THE FLOWERS AND SAY IT WITH SPAGHETTI. — RACHAEL RAY

Small businesses brace for cautious holiday shoppers

By Mae Anderson

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Small businesses are stocking the shelves early this holiday season and waiting to see how many gifts inflation-weary shoppers feel like giving.

Holiday shopping was relatively strong during the past two years as shoppers flocked online to spend, aided by pandemic stimulus dollars. Sales in November and December have been averaging roughly 20% of annual retail sales, according to National Retail Federation, making the holiday season critical for many retailers.

This year, small businesses are bracing for a more muted season, as some Americans spend more cautiously. AlixPartners, the global consulting firm, forecasts that holiday sales will rise between 4% to 7%, far below last year's growth of 16%. With inflation running above 8%, retailers would see a decrease in real sales.

To prepare, owners say they're ordering inventory earlier to avoid the supply-chain snags that frustrated them the past two holiday seasons and to draw in early birds. They're stepping up discounts as much as they can in the face of their own higher costs. And owners also hope more people will shop in stores and holiday markets after doing more of their shopping online during the pandemic.

Max Rhodes, CEO of Faire, an online marketplace used by small businesses to sell their wares wholesale as well as buy goods for retail shops, said he's seeing earlier ordering from merchants who for two years had trouble getting enough holiday inventory stocked in time for Christmas. Stores faced shortages of everything from holiday décor to gift items as COVID-19 lockdowns forced factories to shut, costs rose and fewer shipping containers and truckers were available all causing delivery snarls.

A study for the Council of



Hannah Nash places jewelry in a box that will be shipped out, Friday, Oct. 14, 2022, in Noblesville, Ind. Nash has her small business at her home. Small businesses are stocking the shelves early this holiday season and waiting to see how many gifts inflation-weary shoppers feel like giving.

Associated Press

Supply Chain Management Professionals by global consulting firm Kearney found U.S. business logistics costs surged 22.4% in 2021 to \$1.85 trillion.

"The one thing we're certain of is it's not going to be predictable ... We really don't know what to expect and our retailers feel the same way," Rhodes said. Mat Pond operates The Epicurean Trader in San Francisco, including four brick-and-mortar stores, an online shop and a corporate gift basket business. In past years, he started building inventory in November, but this year he's already stocking up on items such as gourmet food, chocolate, wine and giftware. He's seeing corporations order holiday gift baskets earlier as well.

"Everyone's planning ahead," Pond said. "I think everybody's learning from the past two years." While the pandemic's economic impact has subsided somewhat, consumers are now being tag-teamed by high inflation and rising interest rates.

Overall, spending has held up, although some Americans have been forced to pull back on discretionary items. Any decline can be meaningful because consumer spending makes up 70% of economic activity.

Hannah Nash, the owner of the online jeweler Lucy Nash, expects sales of her earrings, bracelets and other jewelry to slow after

two years of strong growth. The main culprit: inflation.

"There is less money going around to the average person and we expect their living expenses to impact how much they can spend on holiday shopping," Nash said.

Nash also expects more people to shop in stores during these holidays. She started her business, based in Indianapolis, during the pandemic, when online shopping boomed. The percentage of total retail sales done online jumped from 11.5% in 2019 to 17.7% in 2020, then rose again to 18.8% last year, according to the Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks all kinds of payments, including those by cash and debit card. Nash is stepping up discounts and offering bundles to attract shoppers:

Her plans include a 15% discount for new customers this year, up from 10%, starting in November.

And she'll offer bundles of products that are about 20% cheaper than buying items separately.

Major retailers such as Amazon and Walmart are also offering holiday deals to cash-strapped Americans earlier this year. Amazon held a two-day discount event on Oct. 11-12 where the average order was \$46.68, \$13 less than what shoppers spent during the company's Prime Day sales event in July, according to the data group Numerator. □



Kanye West arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party on Feb. 9, 2020, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

Kanye West to buy conservative social media platform Parler

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN

AP Business Writer

The rapper formerly known as Kanye West is offering to buy right-wing friendly social network Parler shortly after getting locked out of Twitter and Instagram for antisemitic posts.

The acquisition of Parler would give West, legally known as Ye, control of a social media platform and a new outlet for his opinions with no gatekeeper.

But even among the new breed of largely right-wing social apps that purport to support free speech by having looser rules and moderation, Parler's user base is tiny.

Parlement Technologies, which owns the platform, and West said the acquisition should be completed in the fourth quarter, but details like price were not disclosed. Parlement Technologies said the agreement includes the use of private cloud services via Parlement's private cloud and data center infrastructure.

Ye was blocked from posting on Twitter and Instagram a week ago over antisemitic posts that the social networks said violated their policies. In one post on Twitter, Ye said he would soon go "death con 3 on JEWISH PEOPLE," according to internet archive records, making an apparent reference to the U.S. defense readiness condition scale known as DEF-

CON.

Ye is no stranger to controversy, once suggesting slavery was a choice and calling the COVID-19 vaccine "the mark of the beast." Earlier this month, he was criticized for wearing a "White Lives Matter" T-shirt to his collection at Paris Fashion Week.

"In a world where conservative opinions are considered to be controversial we have to make sure we have the right to freely express ourselves," Ye said in a prepared statement.

The acquisition could also breathe new life into Parler, which has struggled amid competition from other conservative-friendly platforms like Truth Social, started by former President Donald Trump. □

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Can the Rock steady the DC universe with 'Black Adam'?

By JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In Hollywood's superhero era thus far, there has been one particularly conspicuous absence: While a parade of big-name actors have taken their turns donning various spandex suits, Dwayne Johnson arguably the biggest movie star in the world has, until now, sat out the trend.

The Rock didn't really need a cape to prove his powers. The 6-foot-5 260-pound actor was, in many respects, already a superhero in his own right: a skyscraper-climbing hulk, a shape-shifting demi-god, even a bulked-up tooth fairy.

"I was always ready and open to playing a superhero," Johnson said in a recent interview. "But it had to be right and it had to feel right. I had been approached before in the past about playing a few superheroes that, ultimately, I ended up passing on. They ended up going to the right actors to play them. I just waited."

The fates have finally aligned in "Black Adam," a debut so seamless that it could be called redundant. When Johnson was first trying on Black Adam's suit, he had the muscle padding removed.

Johnson's entry to the superhero business comes at a crucial juncture for the DC Extended Universe, which has been plagued of late by scandal and misfires. Ezra Miller, star of the upcoming "The Flash," has been arrested twice this year amid reports of troubling behavior (in August, Miller sought treatment for what he described as mental health issues). "Batgirl," a \$90 million movie completed for HBO Max, was summarily axed, prompting an outcry over its atypical cancellation.

Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav has promised a "reset" to the studio's DC operations in an overhaul to implement a more Marvel-like 10-year structure and improve quality. At the fulcrum of these two eras sits "Black Adam," which opens in theaters Thursday. Amid such turmoil, it cer-



Pierce Brosnan, left, Noah Centineo, Dwayne Johnson, Aldis Hodge and Quintessa Swindell attend the world premiere of "Black Adam" in Times Square on Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

tainly doesn't hurt to be welcoming in a movie star as popular as Johnson, who has 341 million followers on Instagram and is often forced to deflect questions about a possible presidential run. But just how much stability can The Rock bring to DC?

"I think the timing is actually perfect. What an opportunity we have," Johnson said. "I have been saying for almost years now that the hierarchy of power in the DC universe is about to change."

Before Johnson, not many saw Black Adam as such an axis-tilting force. The character, an ancient Egyptian created by Otto Binder and C.C. Beck, first appeared in a 1945 issue of Fawcett Comics' "In DC Comics" and has generally been portrayed as a supervillain and foe to Captain Marvel (not the Brie Larson one).

More recent treatments have pushed Black Adam more toward antihero status, something the film, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra ("Jungle Cruise"), extends. Black Adam, summoned to modern day, is depicted as a reluctant hero who fears his own powers.

In one telling scene, Black Adam stops for a moment to watch a television with Clint Eastwood as the Man With No Name an antihero model for Black Adam.

"He has been my inspiration from day one. My favorite actor and certainly one of my favorite directors," Johnson said. "I'm happy to call Clint a buddy. That was my way of paying homage to him."

How Black Adam would be introduced to movie audiences wasn't always clear. Initially, Captain Marvel, also known as Shazam, and Black Adam were to debut in a movie together. After the scripting stage, Johnson and others felt the combined launch did a disservice to Black Adam.

"We did have a template for a really good idea, but ultimately both characters required so much space to properly launch them," said producer Hiram Garcia. "We were just struggling in terms of bandwidth that the script could hold and in terms of tone, as well. Inherently, as you saw with how the 'Shazam' movie came out, that movie is just so differently tonally from how 'Black Adam' is."

"Shazam!" starring Zachary Levi, was a goofy, well-

received body-swap hit, grossing \$366 million worldwide in 2019 (a sequel is due out in March). The ambitions for "Black Adam" are larger.

The film, made with a budget roughly twice that of "Shazam!" also introduces the Justice Society of America, a superhero team of Hawkman (Aldis Hodge), Doctor Fate (Pierce Brosnan), Atom Smasher (Noah Centineo) and Cyclone (Quintessa Swindell).

"I always felt like it was a matter of convincing our studio partners to try to look beyond the Justice League," Johnson said. "I love the Justice League. But when you look past them, you open up the DC bible.

There are so many cool characters you can tap into."

It's been a long haul to develop the film, tailor the part to Johnson and shoot the movie around COVID-19 delays. Johnson was first announced to play Black Adam way back in 2014.

"Easy and this process have not gone together," Garcia said.

But the filmmakers were committed to giving Black Adam the proper launch. "If Dwayne Johnson's go-

ing to do a superhero, the powers better be A-plus," said producer Beau Flynn. Superhero films aren't often described as a "passion project" but it's how Johnson talks about "Black Adam." He speaks about the character's previously low profile like an underdog.

"No one gave him a shot," he said. Unlike many of the best-known comic-book characters, Johnson is not taking on this role second-hand.

"No other actors had stepped into the boots of Black Adam," said Johnson who professes a deep connection with the character.

"I'm a very direct talker. Black Adam is very direct with his thoughts, too. The difference is: Black Adam will slap some people around. I might slap some people around but I'll do it with a smile."

As of this summer, Michael De Luca and Pam Abdy are running Warner Bros.' revamped film division, though no new DC leader has yet been appointed. Zaslav has been seeking his studio's answer to Marvel's Kevin Feige to take the reigns. For Johnson, "Black Adam" is part of that new chapter for DC.

"I think you're feeling this sense of urgency and the sense of excitement," said Johnson. "This has been a great convergence of 'Black Adam' coming out and new leadership."

Tracking reports have suggested that Johnson, 50, could be headed for his biggest opening weekend ever at the box office with "Black Adam." But sounding a little like his WWE wrestler, Johnson is also eyeing his next opponent. Black Adam, he believes, is a lesser power to no superhero. He's gunning for Superman. "For five years, the most powerful and unstoppable force in the entire superhero universe has been idle on the sidelines. All that had to come to a new end," says Johnson.

"This is what I mean with this new era in the DC universe. Let's get that hero off the sidelines and on the big screen." □

Bubba Wallace ignored his own mantra in Larson conflict

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Bubba Wallace adopted the mantra of “Peace. Love. Understanding.” to push back against the negativity and vitriol so often hurled his way.

There was nothing peaceful or understanding about Wallace’s skirmish with Kyle Larson at Las Vegas Motor Speedway over the weekend. Wallace appeared to deliberately crash the reigning NASCAR champion in a dangerous retaliatory move Sunday and then he tried to fight Larson. Now NASCAR is in a no-win situation as it decides whether Wallace was out of line.

No penalty? That will be classified as favoritism and maybe even fear of punishing the star of Michael Jordan’s race team, who remains the only Black driver at the top level of the sport. Mild punishment? Cue a mind-numbing debate over precedent.

A suspension? That would be a strong statement against what NASCAR already considers taboo drivers using their cars as weapons though a driver suspension in the final three weeks of the season would be another massive headache for a sanctioning body currently putting out fires in every corner.

Wallace is one of NASCAR’s most polarizing drivers and his successful 2020 push for



Bubba Wallace, right, pushes Kyle Larson after the two crashed during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

NASCAR to ban the Confederate flag at its races deeply divided fans.

The false narrative that Wallace faked a hate crime after a garage pull in his garage stall at Talladega was found to be fashioned as a noose still circulates among some fans, though he never saw it and even the FBI categorized it as a noose. Wallace claims his steering broke when Larson bounced him into the wall so he had no control of his Toyota when he shot down the speedway and hooked Larson’s car.

Data will show if that’s true. It doesn’t pass the eyeball test. It looked as if Wallace chased after Larson to in-

tentionally drill his car in the rear corner, one of the most dangerous moves in NASCAR racing. Wallace’s hit spun Larson directly back into traffic, where he slammed into the door of title hopeful Christopher Bell. Had he not hit Bell’s car, Larson’s trajectory had him headed into the wall backward in a potential nightmare situation: The new Next Gen car is too stiff in the back and drivers are absorbing far too much energy when the impact comes there. Two drivers are out with concussions, NASCAR has held safety briefings the last two race weekends, and any fix won’t come until next sea-

son. Larson believed Wallace was rightfully angry because he did squeeze Wallace into the wall. He wasn’t even upset that Wallace charged after him as Larson tried to get out of the way. (“I’m 5’6, 135 pounds. I’m not going to get too wound up about anything” Larson said last year about driver fighting). Larson does think Wallace crossed a line in terms of safety.

“With everything that’s been going on here lately, with head injuries.... I don’t think it’s probably the right thing to do,” Larson said. “I’m sure with everything going on, he’ll know that he made a mistake in the

retaliation part and I’m sure he’ll think twice about that next time.”

Wallace at the minimum broke a rule by walking on a live track after climbing out of his crashed car to confront Larson. He made contact with a NASCAR official, but most replays show Wallace was only brushing an official’s hand away.

No matter the NASCAR decision, this is going to stick with Wallace for some time. He has never received the benefit of the doubt from NASCAR fans and is often accused of being undeserving of his heavily-funded seat driving for Jordan and Denny Hamlin at 23XI Racing. He withstands an enormous amount of hate, and those very detractors will note he’s had previous outbursts against fellow competitors.

For all those same reasons, maybe Wallace deserves a bit of peace and understanding. He never asked to be NASCAR’s face of diversity, and the role kind of fell in his lap in 2020 during a national reckoning of social justice issues.

Yes, Wallace benefited greatly from using that platform, albeit sometimes reluctantly. Nonetheless, it got him a great job with an exciting upstart team and it wasn’t just that Jordan was now his boss; Wallace even gets to drive the No. 23 in homage to the NBA great. With all that comes a ton of pressure. □

Hornets’ LaMelo Ball unlikely to play in season opener

By STEVE REED
AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Charlotte Hornets All-Star point guard LaMelo Ball is expected to miss Wednesday night’s season opener against the San Antonio Spurs with a sprained left ankle.

Hornets coach Steve Clifford said Monday that Ball is doubtful for the game and is uncertain if he will make the trip out West. “He wasn’t able to do any-

thing today,” Clifford said. “He is doing extra rehab and everything he can, but I would say very doubtful.” Ball was injured in the Hornets’ preseason loss to the Washington Wizards on Oct. 10 when Anthony Gill stepped on his foot. Ball hasn’t practiced or played since.

Clifford said there is no timetable for Ball’s return. If Ball doesn’t play, Terry Rozier would start at point guard alongside Kelly Ou-

bre Jr., Gordon Hayward, P.J. Washington and Mason Plumlee, Clifford said. When asked about not having Ball in the lineup, Clifford joked, “I’m not sleeping as much. I’m eating more.

Usually I have one bag of cough drops. Today I have had three. Other than that, everything else is the same.”

Ball averaged 20.1 points, 7.6 assists and 6.7 rebounds in his second season. □



Charlotte Hornets guard LaMelo Ball is shaken up on a play in the second half of an NBA preseason basketball game against the Washington Wizards in Charlotte, N.C., Monday, Oct. 10, 2022.

Associated Press

NFC East goes from least to beast in 2 years

By ROB MAADDI
AP Pro Football Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The NFC East went from least to beast in less than two years. After sending a losing team to the playoffs in 2020, the division boasts three of the four NFC teams with winning records through six weeks.

The Philadelphia Eagles (6-0) stand alone atop the East as the only unbeaten team in the NFL following a 26-17 victory over the Dallas Cowboys (4-2) on Sunday night. The New York Giants (5-1) are right behind Philly after upset wins over the Ravens and Packers in consecutive weeks proved they're no fluke.

"There's no doubt this is one of the great rivalries," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said after securing his first

win over Dallas. "So, of course you want to win the games against the teams in this division, because that's what's so cool about this division because these are hated rivalries. Now, they all count the same. That's still one win. But it's sweet because this is a cool division."

For now, it's the best in football. The Vikings (5-1) are the only other team in the conference with a winning record. The AFC has just three teams with four wins going into Monday night. The NFC East hasn't sent three teams to the playoffs since 2007 when Tony Romo led the Cowboys to a division crown and Washington and New York earned wild-card berths. The Giants went on to beat New England in the Super



Philadelphia Eagles' Jalen Hurts throws during the first half of an NFL football game in front of Dallas Cowboys' Leighton Vander Esch on Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

Bowl, handing the Patriots their only loss of the season. Considering how inconsistent the rest of the NFC has been, the Eagles, Giants and Cowboys are positioned well for January. The four NFC teams with the best odds to reach the Super Bowl entering the season Buccaneers, Packers, Rams and 49ers are each 3-3 and flawed.

"What's exciting about being 6-0 and not having played a complete game is there's only room to get better and that's our goal," Sirianni said. Rookie coach Brian Daboll has New York headed toward its first winning season since 2016. The Giants have overcome 10-point deficits in the second half in three of their wins. "This league is hard. It's not always going to be perfect. There will be a lot of people down on you," Daboll said. "And you might be down on yourself, wish you could do better. But you keep on getting back up, you keep on swinging, keep on competing, regardless of the score or the situation of the game. And that's not easy to do, right? That's not easy to do when you're down. If you sit on the bench and start ... complaining, that's easy to do. "We know we're a long way away. (It's the) early part of the season. But we just try to

compete and do the best job we can."

Dallas had won four straight games with backup quarterback Cooper Rush until running into Philadelphia. Rush's three interceptions cost the Cowboys against the Eagles, but he performed well enough during Dak Prescott's absence to keep the team in the mix. Prescott said he plans to return this week.

"I'm happy as hell the position we're in," Prescott said. "It's good to be 4-2. I'm not excited we lost, but there's a long season ahead and we're in a good position." The division hasn't had a repeat winner since the Eagles captured four straight titles from 2001-04. The Cowboys won it last season but lost a home playoff game to San Francisco. The Eagles earned a wild-card spot last year and were blown out by Tampa in the opening round.

This isn't the NFC East that won seven of 10 Super Bowls from 1986-95 — that may never be matched — but it's a long way from being the laughingstock it was during the pandemic-stricken 2020 season when the Giants almost won the division at 6-10. Washington defeated the Eagles in the final regular-season game to finish 7-9 and take the title. Philadelphia, playing for draft positioning. □

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